# THE BEACON

#### FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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THE SMOKE-CHASER'S CABIN.

#### The Third Water.

BY JAMES HULL.

WO weeks had passed at the smoke-chaser's cabin at the head of Fiddle Creek, and Walter Crole had seen no one. In fact, nothing had happened. Every morning he called up John Merriman, the forest-ranger, who lived fifteen miles down the valley, to see if the telephone line was in working order. Of course he was lonesome. But what worried him most was that there had been no forest fires for him to fight.

If John Merriman had been able to find anybody else for the position, he would never have hired Walter as a smokechaser. He preferred an older man and one who was more familiar with that remote section of Idaho. So Walter Crole had been hired for three weeks with the understanding that it would be decided at the end of that time whether he was to have the position permanently or not. He wanted to make good. In the course of time he hoped to become a ranger himself, with a district to look after, and a badge to wear. Two weeks had passed already. How could he make good when nothing ever happened?

He was thinking these things over one morning, when the telephone bell rang. It was the ranger's voice that answered. "There's a fire over at Bronson's ranch on Allison Creek."

"Where?" Walter had no idea where Allison Creek was, and no map of that region was ever made.

"Go over to Little Slate Creek and follow up till you come to a trail that takes you over the divide to Allison Creek." "How big a fire is it?"

"It was about ten acres," the ranger explained. "A crew of men were in there last week and got it under control. They left old man Bronson to watch it, and came back. But Mr. Bronson has just

sent a messenger in, to call me up about it. He says it's got away again and he's afraid it'll burn up his ranch."

"Is anybody else coming later?"

"Yes," Merriman assured him, "I'll send three or four more men in there in a couple of days—as soon as they can get there from town. But somebody ought to get there to-night. Good-bye."

Walter caught Baldy, who was easier to catch than Dick, and put on a light pack—a little flour, bacon, dried fruit, rice, cooking outfit, and four blankets. But it was an hour before he had Dick caught, and saddled, and was on his way up the trail.

By three o'clock he had reached Little Slate Creek. Dick responded to the spur and tiptoed gingerly down the steep, slippery bank. Baldy refused to follow, so at the other side of the stream, Walter hooked the loop of the lead-rope over the saddle horn and again applied the spurs. Dick lunged wildly up the bank, and Baldy made one leap into the middle of the stream, lost his footing, and lay with his heels up and the pack submerged in three feet of water. Walter unpacked the

horse and got him to his feet; but the poor old pony was overcome, and when the pack was again put on, and a half-diamond tied over the wet blankets, Baldy dropped to his knees and rolled over. So Walter had to unpack him again and leave him to recover at his leisure. He consoled himself with the thought that he would find ample accommodations at the Bronson ranch, and wouldn't need his blankets and supplies.

A quarter of a mile up the creek he passed a cabin with smoke coming out of the chimney. The prospector inside

greeted him cordially. "Where you bound for?"

"Allison Creek."

"You don't expect to make it to-night, do you? Better stop with me. It's a good day's ride over there."

"No, I believe I'll make it as far as I can and camp. They told me there was a good trail over the divide from here. Where is it?"

The prospector pulled his stubby black beard. "Well sir, I've never been over it. But I think it's about the third water. Follow up the meadow till you come to the third water; then turn off to your right."

Walter found the small tributary and a rather poor trail. There were cow tracks, but no horse tracks. That was a bad indication, but he did not realize it then. For a half-mile it was fairly good. Then it passed under some low-hanging alder-bushes, and further on was intersected by several well-beaten game trails. The further he followed that trail, the worse it got. Dick jumped the logs or stepped carefully over them, and just at dusk they came to a large grassy opening; but the trail did not continue. Reaching Allison Creek that night was now quite out of the question, and Walter was getting hungry. So he resolved to let Dick go back to the meadow again, on Little Slate, and to camp with the prospector. But he could not find the trail by which he had come, and Dick refused to find it for him. Dick seemed to have lost all his horse sense. When they came to one end of the meadow he stopped. When Walter turned him and applied the spurs he walked limply to the other end of the meadow and stopped.

There was only one thing left to do. He pulled off the saddle and laid it under a big pine-tree. Then he tied a rope around Dick's foot and staked him, for he knew Dick would get lonesome and wander away before morning if he was turned loose alone. Two saddle blankets and a slicker do not make the best kind of a bed, but Walter slept well that night, even if the slicker was cold and rumply,



DICK FINDS HIS OLD HOME.

and the blankets no cleaner than blankets ought to be.

In fact he slept so soundly that he paid little attention to Dick's excited snorting and stamping. He heard it, but it made little impression on him. He afterward decided that Dick must have been frightened by a bear somewhere in the vicinity. Just as a little pink became visible in the eastern sky, he woke up. Dick had broken his rope and disappeared.

All the mornings Walter Crole had ever known had been appropriately punctuated by breakfasts. But now there were more important things than breakfasts to worry him. If the Bronson ranch had not burned up already, it would be safe until noon, when the wind usually rose. He must get there before noon. At first he thought of walking, and coming back for the horse and saddle a few days later. But it might be further than he thought. It would take several hours to find the trail. The prospector had been mistaken as to the location of the trail. Perhaps it followed the fourth or fifth tributary. It certainly did not follow the third.

He finally decided that the first thing to do was to catch his horse. Possibly Dick had not gone far. A heavy dew had fallen and the tracks were plain. For an hour he followed through heavy timber and around impassable areas of fallen logs. Dick seemed to be heading in a definite direction. At last the tracks led to a well-beaten trail. It was easy enough to follow them now. But what worried Walter was that Dick never seemed to stop, even to grab a bite of grass now and then. Unless the horse stopped or at least loitered, it would be useless to try to overtake him, lead him back to get the saddle, find the right trail, and get to Bronson's ranch on Allison Creek be-

It got to be ten o'clock. He had been following those tracks five hours and Dick was still traveling straight ahead. Finally he came to a long, open, hogback ridge, which led down to a rather wide valley, and to a poorly traveled highway. At a sudden turn in the road he saw a faint suggestion of smoke rising above the tops of the trees. Then he noticed a meadow and three horses. One of them was Dick. Close at hand was a frame house, and on a board fence was painted "E. H. Bronson." This then, was Allison Creek, and this was the Bronson ranch, and here was his forest fire. Here also was his horse. He was glad to have come up with Dick, but he remembered that it was the fire he had set out to find.

The open ridge to the north was black and smouldering in spots. Occasionally a pine cone would roll down and set fire to the grass below. A board fence a few rods from the house was already in flames, and the fire was creeping lazily through the dry weeds toward the woodshed. The wind was rising, as it always does just before noon.

Walter lost no time. His coat was off, and he grabbed a hoe that somebody had left there for him. In a few minutes he had dug a wide trench in a half-circle, a hundred feet from the house, and set fire to the grass just outside of it. For a few minutes he fought to keep the flames from crossing the trench. Then it was all over. The building was safe.

He entered the house without knocking. Old man Bronson was sitting calmly in

an armchair. A small boy peered shyly under his elbow.

"Well, you got here just in time," Bronson said steadily. "I had it about stopped yesterday afternoon, but I must have had a sort of sunstroke, I guess. I couldn't somehow move around any more."

"I see."

"Charlie and his folks are coming home this afternoon, but they wouldn't have found any house if you hadn't got here. Did you come afoot?"

"Yes. My horse got away and"-

"Oh, that horse that came in this morning? That's old Dick. We used to own him here on the ranch when he was a colt. He knows where his home is, same as anybody else."

When the crew of men came, as the ranger had promised, they found that Walter's work had been well done. He had not only saved Bronson's cabin and perhaps his life, but later had checked other outbreaks of the fire.

"You seem to be dependable, Walter, young as you are," said Merriman, when the report reached him. "You have earned the appointment, and I am glad to make it."

"Thank you. I'll do my best," Walter answered.

When he went to mount Dick for his ride home, he patted the horse's neck fondly.

"You gave me a pretty scare, old boy," he said, "but you brought me here all right. I've got the place, and I'll not forget that I owe it partly to you."

## The Angel of the Barnyard.

BY L. M. WESTON.

HER gentle hand oft soothed a nervous

So small and weak, devoid of strength and force,

Yet, laid upon the frightened creature's side.

He felt a power that would not be defied. The power of love—he knew she was his friend.

That on her care and help he could depend. The cattle, too, with wondering eyes surveved

The ministrations of this barnyard maid. A little extra feed for some weak cow, A gentle word, a kindly pat,—yet how

This loving notice brought health, hope, and cheer

To humble beasts, throughout the winter drear.

They liked her soft, sweet voice and light caress,

But of her species could not even guess.

She differed so from mankind they had known,

Who to them hay and other feed had thrown,

Yet cursed them roundly, many times a day.

She, human, with her kindly voice and way?

Ah, no; their guardian angel she must be, And very close, they thought, to Deity.

The Pilgrim inheritance is not a thing to be lived upon but to be lived up to.

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON.

The Golden Age is not behind but before us.

St. Simon.

#### The Girl who had no Talent.

BY EVA J. DE MARSH.

"AMMA," said Alice West, looking up from a letter which she had just received, "what do you think I should do about accepting this invitation from Aunt Lois?"

"You would like to go, I suppose?"

"Y-e-s! But I'm so afraid I can't keep up with the girls I shall meet there. Marjory and Mamie play and sing beautifully; Gertrude is clever at games; and Minnie is so bright and interesting,—why, she fairly sparkles, when she talks,—and you know how shy I am! I haven't any talent."

Mrs. West's eyes grew tender.

"I know, dear, just what you mean," she answered. "There was a time when I, too, felt much the same way."

Alice looked at her mother in astonishment

"You, Mamma!" she exclaimed. "Why, I didn't know you were ever shy!"

"Very, when I was a girl," replied Mrs. West, smiling at her daughter's evident surprise.

"How did you ever get over it, Mamma?"
"I learned to think of other people and not to think about myself. I came to see that I must do my share when I was invited, so that people would want me to come again. Others were shy, too, and in trying to make them feel at ease I forgot myself."

"Do you think, Mamma, if I could once make up my mind to get started, I would get over caring about doing things before people?" she asked.

"I'm sure of it, dear. Really, others do not think so much about us, if we get them interested in what we are saying and doing. You have had many advantages, Alice, and can be very interesting, when you try. Be brave, dear, and make the start. Mere showiness isn't the most desirable thing in the world. I have known a sunny smile, or an opportune word, to count far more in a difficult situation than the greatest accomplishment or the cleverest wit. Have you decided yet what you would like to take with you to your aunt's? The fifteenth isn't so very far away, you know."

Alice had not yet decided, so, happily and busily, mother and daughter entered into plans for the coming visit.

It was quite late in the day when Alice reached Rocky Ford, and she barely had time to slip from her traveling dress into a more suitable one, when dinner was announced. Her left-hand neighbor was Cousin Eunice, and on her right sat Grandmother Wood. As the newly arrived guest, interest naturally centered about Alice, but she found time to notice that while Grandmother's plate was well filled. the old lady seemed rather out of things in general. Alice was distressed. Once or twice, she tried to draw Grandmother into the conversation, but her efforts did not seem to meet with much success. "I'll do it yet," she said to herself.

"How did you enjoy your trip down, Alice?" inquired Aunt Lois.

"Very much indeed, Auntie! The weather was delightful, and there was so much that was new and interesting. One of the nicest experiences I had was with an old lady and her grand-daughter, a teacher. They got on the train at Claxton, just this side of Milford, you know, and they

were so devoted to one another. When we were near Brookfield, Miss Lang received a message which obliged her to go to Albany at once. That meant she must change at Bixby for her connection and leave her grandmother to finish the journey alone. Mrs. Ashley protested she would be all right, but I never saw any one so distressed as Miss Lang. Of course, sitting close behind them, I couldn't help hearing all they said, so I just leaned forward and told them, if they would trust me, I would be glad to look after Mrs. Ashley as far as Rocky Ford. They were as grateful as they could be! Mrs. Ashley was going to Marlborough, and friends would meet her there, so she would be alone only a very short time. Miss Lang thanked me over and over, and Mrs. Ashley kissed me, in the sweetest way. She was lovely."

Alice couldn't tell them what Mrs. Ashley had said at parting: "Good-bye, and God bless you, my dear! Some day you will be old, and God will send somebody to take care of you," but the mere remembrance of it made her very happy.

Perhaps it was the unwontedly long speech, or it might have been the novelty of an appreciative audience. At any rate, Alice's eyes were sparkling and her cheeks glowing, when she ceased speaking.

"What did you say the grandmother's name was?" inquired Mrs. Wood.

"Mrs. Ashley."

"What did she look like?"

"All soft and pretty and little. She had the nicest manner and a very sweet voice." Grandmother nodded.

"Where was she going?"

"To her home, a few miles west of Marlborough."

"It must be," said Grandmother, excitedly.

"What? Who, Mother?" inquired Uncle

"Why, Edith Ashley! She and I were once the dearest of friends,-she was Judge Lane's daughter, you know-but we drifted apart, years ago, and haven't seen each other since. I should so love to see her again!"

"She said she had lost her husband," said Alice, "but she still goes by the name

of Mrs. Burton Ashley."

"It's Edith! -I know it is!" exclaimed Grandmother, more positively than ever. "We'll have to look her up, Mother,"

said Uncle Will.

There weren't any more dull times for Grandmother that evening. She sat close beside Alice, whose hand she now and then patted lovingly.

"I don't know when I've seen Mother have so good a time," said Uncle Will, after Mrs. Wood had retired to her own room. "Why, I do believe she enjoyed herself as much as any of us."

"More, it seemed to me," said Alice.
"Isn't it nice to be a lovely old lady?" she inquired thoughtfully.

"Almost as nice as being an agreeable young one," said Uncle Will, pinching her ear.

Alice loved to read aloud, and when the family heard her sweet, clear voice at family devotions next morning, and noted with what interest and understanding she read, they encouraged her. To Uncle Will, it seemed that a girl with a voice like hers should be able to sing. While they were in the library, one day, he inquired.

"Do you sing, Alice?"

"Oh, no," replied Alice, "scarcely at all,-just a little, with others. I haven't any talent, you know."

Uncle Will glanced sharply at his niece. He disliked vanity and insincerity. However, there seemed no indication that Alice was posing, so he returned to his paper. Alice found the book of which she was in quest and turned to leave the room. Her uncle glanced over the top of his paper.

"Want to go for a ride?" he inquired.

Alice was about to reply in the affirmative, when she remembered Grandmother, and she hesitated. The old lady would miss it so, if she could not have the comfort of her daily reading.

"Mother is going too," said Uncle Will,

as if divining her thoughts.

The ride was a delightful one, out into the country, past quiet dairy-farms and well-tilled fields. As they came in sight of a low, gray stone house, Uncle Will turned to Mrs. Wood.

"Would you like to see the old home, Mother?" he inquired.

Mrs. Wood's face was radiant.

"That's just what I hoped you would

say, Will," she replied.
"We lived there, before Father died," explained Uncle Will. "Mother hasn't seen it for a long time."

"Not since Will was married," said Mrs. Wood, turning to Alice. "Your uncle was born in that little room where the roses are so thick. I remember how I used to like to lie and look at them. There have always been roses at Rosemont, but I never saw them lovelier than they are this year."

Mrs. Lemaire, the minister's wife, was very glad to see them, though she seemed a bit tired.

"You are not working too hard?" inquired Mrs. Wood, solicitously, as she and Mrs. Lemaire sat chatting together. "Minister's wives are apt to do that," she added, with a smile.

"No, I think not," answered Mrs. Lemaire, smiling in turn. "It's just that I am a bit anxious about baby. He has been worrying all day, and has scarcely let me out of his sight."

"Mayn't I take him?" inquired Alice.

"I am afraid he will not let you," said Mrs. Lemaire. Then, as she saw Alice's evident disappointment, "However, you may try."

To Mrs. Lemaire's surprise, the child settled contentedly into Alice's arms.

"It is wonderful," said Mrs. Lemaire to Alice, "the way he takes to you. As a rule, he is very shy with strangers and will not even allow them to talk to him."

"Guess he knows I'm used to babies," replied Alice. "There are two younger than I at home. Mother says she doesn't know what she'd do without me."

"You must be pretty busy," said Mrs. Lemaire. "I find my hands full with one. I don't know what I should do with two."

"Oh, I don't mind. Mother says that is my accomplishment, taking care of folks."

"Being useful isn't a bad sort of accomplishment," said Mrs. Lemaire.

"Neither is being kind," added Grandmother, quietly.

It was fully seven o'clock when they reached home. Nora was out of patience, and she was a bit cross. She had plans of her own, and Mrs. Allison had promised her the evening out.

"Eunice and I will do the dishes," said Alice, "so you can go just as soon as dinner is over."

Nora's lip trembled.

"How good you are, Miss!" she exclaimed. "I hate to let you, and I wouldn't, if it wasn't just the way it is, but you see my sister can't stay overnight, and goodness knows when we'll be able to see each other again."

"It isn't a bit of trouble, Nora," smiled Alice. "It'll just be a lark for us."

Eunice wasn't so sure. She hated doing dishes, but worse she disliked having Nora cross, so she said nothing. It wasn't long until the dishes were done, then there was a long, happy evening. Nor was that the only time Alice found opportunity to help. Indeed, she rather seemed to have a knack of noticing where the helping hand was needed. When she left for home, Aunt Lois exclaimed:-

"No talent! Why, that girl's got more talent than all the rest of us put together. She seems to know what to do, almost before you do yourself. If that isn't talent, I don't know what it is."

"Just the art of being kind," said Grandmother, nodding her head thoughtfully.

"O Mother," said Alice, when she reached home, "I've had such a good

Mother smiled. "I knew you would, dear," was all she said.

#### The Poplar.

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

A LITTLE poplar by my door Whispers all day long; I hear him when I wake at dawn And when the shadows throng.

He whispers, whispers, whispers, When every wind goes by, And sometimes seems to whisper, too, When not a breeze is nigh.

He and the winds are best of chums. And he has much to tell-Perhaps of birds who stop with him Or in his branches dwell.

And often does it seem to me He must have quite a store, Unless he tells (he might, you know) One secret o'er and o'er!

#### Fun.

The Friends of a certain First-day School were astonished at the text given by a small girl, who in a tone of great earnestness repeated during the closing exercises: "Ye cannot serve God and Mamma."-Friends Intelligencer.

"Young man," said a pompous individual, "I did not always have this carriage. When I first started in life I had to walk." "You were lucky," remarked the youth. "When I first started in life I couldn't walk!"-The American Boy.

The telephone rang and the new Polish maid answered it. "Hello!" came from the receiver. "Hello!" answered the girl, flushed with the pride of a new language. "Who is this?" again came the voice. "I don't know who it is," said the girl. "I can't see you."-The Way.



# THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness. OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine. OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

3 WATSON AVENUE,

Dear Miss Buok,—I have written a letter before for this Corner and have become a member of the Beacon Club, but I thought I would

Last year, in our church, the girls had a Junior Alliance. We did brass work, sewing, and a number of other things. Then we had a sale. At the sale we took in thirty dollars. With the boys' help we gave a play and took in thirty-three dollars. With the money we were able to have two tennis courts this sumper which we onlyed year, ruch.

mer, which we enjoyed very much.

But as our work was entirely indoors last year, we decided to have a troop of Girl Scouts. This would give us long walks and

picnics, learning first aid, housekeeping, and also taking physical exercises. But as there are not enough girls in our Sunday school old enough to be Girl Scouts, we decided not to have it in the church, and to have girls in other churches also. We do not want to give up our Junior Alliance altogether, so we hold a meeting once a morth.

4221/2 EAST JEFFERSON AVENUE,

My Dear Miss Buck,—When I was in Boston this summer I told you I would write to you. I gave your good wishes, which you sent by me, to "The Rosebud Garden of Girls," our

Mr. Gilmour, our minister, takes great interest in our class, and likes the boys and girls in our Sunday school to belong to the Beacon

NELLIE MAUD MACBROOM.

#### Church School News.

HE Editor has seen samples of the work done by a class in our school at Haverhill, Mass., in a review lesson on "God's Wonder World." Ruth Gardner prepared note-book sheets on bees, butterflies, and ants, illustrating with pictures pasted on the pages. The text showed good knowledge of the subject and an understanding of the religious lesson, and the cover was illustrated with colored butterfly designs. Doris Cahill wrote an article on "Growing Things" which showed thought and understanding of the beauty and wonder of the changing seasons.

The Independent Protestant church of Columbus, Ohio, has sent out a searching Sunday-school Questionnaire to every member of the congregation. The leading article in the church paper for October refers to this survey and deals with the church's task in helping to build a new world by the religious training it gives its children and young people.

The October Calendar of the Church of Our Father at Lancaster, Pa., shows a thoroughly graded school using the Beacon Course. An Institute of Religious Education brought together a good group of children after school on a week-day for a demonstration service of worship and a lesson to fourth-grade pupils.

Our school in the Unitarian church at Rochester has more than doubled its membership the past year under the guidance of Miss Anna V. M. Jones, superintendent. There is a fine spirit of devotion in the school and hearty participation in the service. One interesting feature is a brief report from each class on the lesson of the preceding Sunday. In three or four sentences each member tells the general lesson theme and its religious and ethical teaching. The Editor expects much from this fine school during the year, and wishes for it the highest success.

## RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XIX.

I am composed of 12 terror.

My 12, 6, 3, is a bog.

My 8, 9, 10, 4, 11, is to scold.

My 7, 6, 11, 12, is a ridge of rock.

My 5, 1, 2, 5, 10, is a color.

My whole is something that every one uses.

ETHEL S. WILLIAMS.

#### ENIGMA XX.

I am composed of 30 letters and am the first I am composed of 30 letters and am the nr line of an old song.

My 23, 7, 21, 3, 17, is a favorite meat, My 30, 14, 20, 11, is a fish.

My 12, 19, 18, is a domestic animal, My 26, 27, 15, 20, 28, 22, is a fruit.

My 13, 4, 29, 16, 30, 1, is a very old game.

My 6, 8, 9, 5, is not sharp.

My 25, 24, 10, is having taken food.

My 2, is a consonant.

Sunday-school Advocate.

Sunday-school Advocate.

#### SHORTENED WORDS.

Behead and curtail the following:

1. A part of the head and get an adverb of

ace.
2. To frighten, and get a yehicle.
3. Was shut, and get to cease to have.
4. Selected, and get a rubber pipe.
5. A weapon, and get a garden vegetable.
6. Groups of two, and get atmosphere.
7. Near at hand, and get a conjunction.
8. A famous city of Greece, and get an advance of the second second.

E. A. C.

#### · CHARADE.

CHARADE.

My first is used in boxing bouts
And on a ship beside,
And also as a mineral
Is scattered far and wide.

My second is a water trip,
Likewise an even line
Of pins, or plants, or other things,
Or soldiers stepping fine.
My whole's a busy little bird
That's seen the country through.
Behead him twice, and then, behold,
A weapon comes to view!
Youth's Companion.

### CAUSE AND CURE.

I'm that which gives you a cold,—take care! I also may cure you, which seems fair. I'm more than fair, for, with right good will, I gladly will pay the doctor's bill!

The Wellspring.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 7.

ENIGMA XV.—The First Parish Church, ENIGMA XVI.—The Lend a Hand Club, MISSING WORDS.—1. Partner. 2. Depart-ment. 3, Partridge. 4. Apartment. 5, Partles. 6. Apart. 7. Departure. 8. Impart. 9, Par-ticipate. 10. Particulars.

The birds that live around our home
Are our true friends both day and night;
An owl guards in our tree at dusk,
A red bird wakes us with the light.

# THE BEACON

FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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Houlton, Mr.

I am thirteen years old. I have three brothers; one is older and two younger. I am a sophomore in high school this year. I am corresponding with ten girls in the United States, a girl in Scotland, one in France, and one in India. But I would still like to have more write to me.

Last year, in our characterists.

The Power of Little Things.

BY THE EDITOR.

meeting once a month. Yours sincerely.

SARA S. HOWE.

DALLAS, TEX.

I enjoy The Beacon very much and especially the enigmas and puzzles.

I shall be glad to belong to the Beacon Club and wear the Beacon pln.

Sincerely,

UR Bible often speaks of the power of little things. One of the shortest

of the parables of Jesus told how a very little leaven—that is yeast, you know -made a whole great lump of dough quite light. One of his followers, Paul, afterward said to the Christians in Galatia, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"; and the prophet Zechariah, centuries before, had asked, "Who hath despised the day of small things?"

There is a little Celtic legend which tells how very much some small, despised creature may do.

A peasant boy was told by his cruel master, that he must pick every one of the tiny seeds that had been scattered over a field, so that none of them would sprout and grow. He could have only one day for this impossible task-just between dawn and dark. Unless every seed was gathered in that time, the boy must lose his life.

He began his task with a heavy heart. He had no hope that he could finish it, but he meant to do all that he could.

After a time, as he worked, he noticed that the field was swarming with ants. Every one of these little creatures carried off a tiny seed and came back for another just as fast as it could go.

The legend says that the boy believed in fairies, as did all the Celts; and he thought that the "Good People" as they called them, had sent the ants to help him.

Then he worked on with more courage, sometimes hoping, sometimes despairing, but never once stopping. The ants did not stop either. Just as the sun was dipping down in the west, a little old lame ant came limping onto the field, and carried off the very last one of the tiny seeds. So the boy's life was saved.